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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: MNUC, PK
 SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL TASK FORCE ON NON-PROLIFERATION

REF: ISLAMABAD 15989

1. THE CONGRESSIONAL TASK FORCE ON NONPROLIFERATION HELD AN INFORMAL, PUBLIC MEETING ON AUGUST 2 BILLED AS "NUCLEAR PAKISTAN -- SOMETHING TO STOP OR MANAGE?" CONGRESSMAN EDWARD MARKEY PRESIDED OVER THE MEETING, WITH DR. WILLIAM CRONIN OF THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH STAFF SERVING AS PANEL MODERATOR. SENATORS ALAN CRANSTON AND CLAIBORNE PELL MADE BRIEF STATEMENTS BEFORE THE PANEL DISCUSSION BEGAN BUT DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE DEBATE. CONGRESSMAN MEL LEVINE ATTENDED BRIEFLY. PANELISTS INCLUDED UNDER SECRETARY WILLIAM SCHNEIDER, REPRESENTING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH; DR. RODNEY JONES, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CSIS; DR STEPHEN COHEN UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS OFFICE OF ARMS CONTROL, DISARMAMENT, AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY; AND DR. JED SNYDER, WILSON CENTER INTERNATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM. SENATE STAFFERS JERRY WARBERG AND PETER GALBRAITH SPOKE FOR SENATORS CRANSTON AND PELL RESPECTIVELY. THE PAKISTAN EMBASSY WAS STRONGLY REPRESENTED. SINCE THIS WAS AN INFORMAL MEETING, NO

TRANSCRIPT WAS PREPARED.

2. THE DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON THE PROPOSED CRANSTON AMENDMENT AND THE BROADER SECURITY ISSUES IT INVOLVES. AT THE OUTSET, SENATOR CRANSTON CLAIMED THAT HE WAS MUSTERING BIPARTISAN SUPPORT TO HALT THE SUPPLY OF F-16S TO PAKISTAN UNTIL IT MEETS MINIMUM NONPROLIFERATION CRITERIA BUT THAT HE WAS STILL WORKING ON THE EXACT LANGUAGE OF THE AMENDMENT WHICH HE INTENDED TO ATTACH TO THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OR TO A CONTINUING RESOLUTION. THIS IMPLIES THAT WE WILL NOT SEE A CRANSTON AMENDMENT UNTIL SEPTEMBER, BUT THIS COULD CHANGE QUICKLY.

3. ALL THE DISCUSSANTS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WARBERG AND GALBRAITH ARGUED, ALBEIT TO VARYING DEGREES, AGAINST THE CRANSTON AMENDMENT AND THE CUT-OFF OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE

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TO PAKISTAN. OPPONENTS TO THE CRANSTON AMENDMENT MADE THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS (OBVIOUSLY, NOT ALL THE OPPONENTS TO THE AID CUT-OFF ADVOCATED ALL THE FOLLOWING POINTS.):

THE PURPOSE OF U.S MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN IS TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SECURITY. CUTTING OFF THE DELIVERY OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS WILL PUSH PAKISTAN TO A DEVELOP NUCLEAR DEVICES AT AN ACCELERATED PACE.

-- THE PAKISTAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM CANNOT BE VIEWED IN ISOLATION; IT WAS STIMULATED BY THE INDIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM WHICH HAD BEEN ITSELF STIMULATED BY THE CHINESE NUCLEAR PROGRAM.

-- PAKISTAN CONTINUES TO PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE AFGHAN RESISTENCE AND ACCEPTING AFGHAN REFUGEES. IT CONTINUES TO SERVE AS A BULWARK AGAINST SOVIET EXPANSIONISM DIRECTED TOWARD THE PERSIAN GULF AND THE INDIAN OCEAN.

-- ONE MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE CAPABILITY TO EXERCISE THE NUCLEAR OPTION AND THE ACTUAL POSSESSION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THERE ARE MANY DEGREES OF "GOING NUCLEAR." SINCE INDIA HAS A PROVEN NUCLEAR CAPABILITY, PAKISTAN EVIDENTLY FEELS IT MUST, AS A MATTER OF VITAL NATIONAL SECURITY, POSSESS THE CAPABILITY TO PRODUCE NUCLEAR DEVICE.

4. THE PROONENTS OF THE CRANSTON AMMENDMENT COUNTERED WITH THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS:

- PAKISTAN WILL AT SOME POINT EXPLODE A NUCLEAR DEVICE
THUS PROVOKING AN AID CUT-OFF UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION.

-- WITH OUR PRESENT LEVERAGE MIDWAY THROUGH THE \$3.2 BILLION ASSISTANCE PACKAGE, NOW IS THE TIME TO STOP THE PAKISTAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM. PAKISTAN STILL HAS MUCH TO LOSE IF IT PROVOKES A CESSION OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

- PAKISTAN WILL SUPPORT THE AFGHAN RESISTENCE DESPITE A U.S. MILITARY AID CUT-OFF. IT IS IN PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL INTEREST TO DO SO; IT IS IN PRESIDENT ZIA'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL INTEREST TO DO SO AS WELL.

5. IN SUM, IF THE PURPOSE OF THE DISCUSSION WAS TO BUILD SUPPORT FOR THE CRANSTON AMENDMENT, IT PROBABLY FAILED. THOSE WHO CAME BELIEVING THAT THERE WAS A CLEAR-CUT CASE IN FAVOR OF THE CRANSTON AMENDMENT PROBABLY LEFT WITH A GREATER AWARENESS OF THE DOWNSIDE TO TERMINATING MILITARY AID TO PAKISTAN.

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END OF MESSAGE

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